

**DISTRICT OF CARLETON NORTH
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

POLICY NO. A-07

Category:	Administration
Policy Number:	A-07
Effective Date:	
Approval by Council:	
Supersedes:	Not applicable
Amended:	Not applicable

1. POLICY STATEMENT:

The Municipality of the District of Carleton North encourages the use of online social media tools where the tool is part of a disciplined and thoughtful communications strategy designed to reach its target audience being residents, agencies and stakeholders, the business community, and visitors.

This policy reflects District of Carleton North’s interest and willingness to initiate appropriate social media opportunities with the goal of building strong relationships with key audiences and enhancing the District of Carleton North’s brand with residents, agencies and stakeholders, the business community, and visitors.

2. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to set guidelines applicable to the creation, use and maintenance of social media communication tools, and outline social media governance. Further, this policy establishes criteria which outlines the acceptable guidelines for the personal and professional use of social media as it pertains to the District of Carleton North.

This policy is required to ensure that:

- The use of social media tools does not compromise public safety or the District of Carleton North’s image;
- The information provided through social media aligns with the District of Carleton North’s vision and guiding principles;
- Social media content does not violate individual privacy or conflict with existing municipal policies and by-laws or other regulations as applicable; and,
- Social media content posted on behalf of the municipality is accurate, accessible, transparent and as accountable as possible.

The primary goals of the Municipality's use of social media are as follows:

- Increase awareness of municipal services;
- Augment existing corporate communication methods and processes;
- Provide an additional mechanism through which the Municipality keeps abreast of customer comments and perceptions regarding the Municipality;
- Disseminate time-sensitive information quickly;
- Provide communication using cost-effective social media tools;
- Correct misinformation, remedy mistakes, or alter services to build stronger relationships;
- Develop citizen's trust;
- Utilize social media's analytical tools to monitor, track and evaluate the Municipality's communications and marketing efforts;
- Provide another method by which stakeholders can engage with the Municipality; and,
- Utilize social media as an additional way to collaborate with the public and other municipality's on mutually beneficial programs and initiatives.

3. SCOPE:

This policy applies to:

- All official social media accounts authorized and managed by the Municipality
- All staff authorized to publish content on behalf of the Municipality
- Content posted by the public on the Municipality's social media pages.

This policy does **not** apply to personal social media accounts of staff, elected officials, or Members of Council when they are not acting in an official capacity.

4. DEFINITIONS:

CAO means the Chief Administrative Officer of the District of Carleton North

Council means the Council of the District of Carleton North, including Councillors and Mayor.

Employees under this policy, means all employees (full-time, part-time, casual, temporary) and officials, members of committees, volunteers and any person who has been retained and/or engaged to act on behalf of the Municipality

Information Technology (IT) System means all electronic communication devices used by the District of Carleton North council, employees, or contractors which include, but not are limited to all computers and telephone networks, devices and applications as well as mobile devices (e.g. tablets, smart phone devices and pagers).

Online Communication means the exchange of information using the internet or mobile communication network for any purpose (e.g. information sharing, marketing, public engagement, etc.)

RTIPPA means the Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Social Media means online platforms that enable content sharing and public interaction. These channels can include Facebook, X (Twitter), YouTube, Instagram, as well as blogs, mobile applications, websites, photo boards, discussion boards or any other online location where commentary is publicly shared and attributed to the corporation as an employee, or elected official.

Social Media Account Administrator means an employee designated by the District of Carleton North to maintain a particular social media account, including writing and publishing content and monitoring, managing and measuring account activity.

Trolling means the activity of making deliberately offensive or provocative online posts with the aim of upsetting someone, eliciting an angry response and/or encouraging negative or unproductive discussion.

Website means the Municipality’s websites that are primary sources for information and about the services, programs and events.

5. POLICY:

- The Municipality’s social media will be updated regularly and will share timely and accurate information with the public including, but not limited to official Municipality business, Council decisions, statements, information about services, programs, and/or events, employee recruitment, content to educate and inform the public and other information related to the municipality.
- Third parties are not permitted to have access to the Municipality’s social media to post content.
- Those authorized to post to the Municipality’s social media must, at all times, conduct themselves in the best interests of the Municipality.
- Those who will be posting to the Municipality’s social media will be trained by the department manager. Trained employees are trusted to have access to login and password information that is owned by the Municipality.

- Those authorized to post to social media may not disclose confidential or sensitive information related to the Municipality, its business and/or affairs, elected officials, employees, volunteers, vendors, suppliers, residents, or other stakeholders.
- Any information, photos or videos that are shared or posted to the Municipality's social media may be used by the Municipality for promotional and/or marketing purposes, provided the appropriate permissions have been obtained.
- Comments, posts and/or messages solicited by the Municipality and collected for the public record using the Municipality's social media will be treated like any other form of communication, and as such will be subject to RTIPPA. Social media records may be retained or archived in accordance with the Municipality's Records Authority.
- Municipal social media sites are monitored Monday to Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm and may be monitored outside of these hours during events or in emergency situations. Questions or comments will be acknowledged or answered within two business days.
- Social media is not considered an official method for submitting formal service requests, complaints, notices, applications, or correspondence to the Municipality. Members of the public will be directed to the Municipality's official communication channels (website, email or phone, or in-person) as required.
- The Municipality may pre-schedule messages promoting events or Municipality initiatives to be released after business hours or on weekends.
- Inappropriate comments may be deleted and/or hidden without notice. Whether a comment is determined to be inappropriate is in the sole discretion of the CAO.
- Posts that include profane or disrespectful language, especially those directed to Municipality employees, are not appropriate and will not be tolerated. If a post violates the Municipality's Social Media Policy, the Municipality:
 - Will hide or delete the post where possible; and
 - May: report, request removal of, ignore, mute and/or block the user.
- As an active participant in online conversations, the Municipality may follow partners, community groups, organizations or individuals, and may share content from other users if the material is aligned with District of Carleton North's core values, services or initiatives.
- The Municipality may promote events on its website and/or social media sites if the Municipality is involved as a participant, partner, host, or if the event is in the Municipality and aligns with the Municipality's core values.

- The Municipality reserves the right to review, edit, modify, or delete any comment submitted to a Municipality social media site by a user. The Municipality may choose to turn off comments on any post at any time.

6. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Identifiable Municipal employees should make it clear that, if posting from personal social media accounts and commenting upon Municipal related matters, they are clearly voicing only their opinion, and not official Municipal position. Avoid the appearance of officially representing the Municipality by not posting logos, photographs, graphics, or other visual insignia without the Municipality's permission.

Employees posting comments on personal social media accounts are prohibited from disseminating any private Municipal organizational information therein, such as internal deliberations regarding how policies and decisions are made, or negative, inflammatory comments regarding the District of Carleton North. Posts involving, but not limited to the following will not be tolerated and may subject the individual to discipline:

- Content which violates the *Criminal Code of Canada* or the *New Brunswick Human Rights Act*
- Proprietary and/or confidential Municipal information;
- Harassing, discriminatory or sexual innuendos directed to District of Carleton North employees;
- Identify or make commentary on behalf of Municipal employees without the consent of that other employee; and,
- Content which violates any of the Municipal policies.

Due to possible sensitive nature, it is generally advised that employees refrain from commenting and/or interacting with Municipal related information posted on social media.

7. EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

Municipal employees and members of the public commenting on Municipal related posts can have no expectation of confidentiality or privacy in relation to their online activities as they pertain to, and are associated with, the legitimate interests of the District of Carleton North. Posting content on social media sites regarding the Municipality, and Municipal matters, is considered a publication, not a private activity. Under no circumstances will Municipal staff publish personal information, pertaining to either themselves or to others, on Municipal social media sites. Personal information, within the meaning of RTIPPA, does not include the names and business contact particulars of the Municipality's elected officials. All records or other personal information collected through social media are protected under the Local Governance Act and RTIPPA.

Certification for the District of Carleton North Policy Manual:

I certify that this *Social Media Policy*, as indicated above was adopted by Council.



Mayor

April 14, 2026
Date of Council Resolution



Clerk

April 14, 2026
Date Policy in Effect

